

Port Washington Youth Activities

PYA SPORTS HALL OF FAME

NICK DEMEO



As a key PYA volunteer who for more than 15 years has been a coach, director, committee-head, and major fundraiser for the organization, Nick DeMeo has lived his entire life in Port Washington. He started playing in PYA the same year as the organization's inception, 1963.

Much has changed in those 42 years since he first showed up on the original Lions Field as a 10-year-old baseball player. The names of coaches that stick out in his mind who initially developed a solid foundation for his athletic ability and love of sports reads like an early history of PYA. These include his late father Vic, Joe King (who was with Donno Co. sanitation in Port Washington, an early and active baseball sponsor for many years), Tony Siconolfi, and Ed Clark (PYA HOF '94).

Nick's involvement in baseball and basketball continued through his early teens when he also began to develop skills in two very different sports - - gymnastics and golf. The latter coincided with the beginning of 11 years of involvement in the golf operations at North

Hempstead Country Club. Starting as a caddy under longtime caddymaster Tony Indence, Nick worked his way up to the pro shop staff for club professional Joe Watrous. Nick, who first picked up a golf club when he was 8, sharpened his game by playing the course whenever he could.

The strength and flexibility he developed as a 3-year letterman on the Schreiber High School gymnastics team, where he won the Coach's Award as a senior, lent itself to benefit his golf game even further. Nick was a 3-year letter winner for Schreiber's golf team as well under coach Frank Meystrik, was also the Coach's Award winner for the team in 1971, and placed 2nd in the Nassau County High School Golf Championship his senior year, too.

Upon graduation from Schreiber, his involvement at North Hempstead paid dividends, as he was a Long Island Caddie Scholarship winner. Nick took his golfing accolades to Florida where he attended Jacksonville University, played on their golf team throughout his time there, and graduated in 1976. His summers were spent back in the pro shop at NHCC, but by the time his undergraduate days were finished, he was an accomplished enough player to land a job as the assistant golf pro at North Hempstead, again working under Watrous.

As much as he enjoyed earning a living at the game he truly loves, after 3 years he left the golf industry to go into private business. He spent 11 years with Crystal Fire Restoration. Then, in 1989, Nick and a partner struck out on their own and formed Total Restoration Inc., which they have built to a highly successful business in Westbury over the last 16 years.

As Nick's family began to grow, and while he still found time for golf, he came back to a resurgent PYA in 1990 to coach his son Nick in baseball, and his daughter Nicole a few years later in basketball and softball. He was elected to the PYA Board in 1994, and continued to coach for 8 more years. Highlights from those years include him taking part as a coach in PYA's inaugural trip to the summer baseball tournaments in Cooperstown in 1996, and succeeding Guy Crawford (PYA HOF '01) as coach of the summer baseball travel team from 1996 to 2000.

Nick has also served as chairman of two committees during his time as a PYA director - - the Sponsorship/Signage committee, and the Golf committee. The Golf committee took shape in early 1998 when he proposed to the PYA board that they should organize a golf outing as a fall fundraiser. As a result, initially 70 local golfers traveled down to Lido Beach Golf Course in mid-September of that year, and PYA netted about \$5,000 for its efforts. In the ensuing 7 years, the PYA Golf Outing has grown to be our organization's second largest annual fundraiser. By 2004, the outing attracted 192 golfers, was staged locally at the Village Club at Sands Point, and netted nearly 5 times the amount of that initial outing. This is perhaps Nick's finest achievement as a PYA volunteer, and will be his lasting legacy as he continues to run the outing to this day.

Nick's family, in addition to his 2 children, includes his wife Linda, to whom he has been married for 27 years. He still manages to play enough golf to compete every year for the club championship at Wheatley Hills Golf Club in East Williston, where he is a member.